≅TeamWorks

February 10, 2005

Tools

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The Big Story:

Corporate connection

Corporate Board members team up for action at summit meeting ...

Feedback

Contact us with feedback or submit your e-mail address for updates.

By the Numbers

Scheduled to arrive 02/13/05 - 02/19/05:

Hanford - 2 INL - 4 RFETS - 17 SRS - 2

(subject to change)

3,323 total shipments received as of 02/09/05

<u>Disposal</u> Waste disposed as of 02/09/05:

4,269 standard waste boxes 1,295 ten-drum overpacks 59,746 waste drums

26,400 cubic meters



Operations:

Just in time

Panel 3 is ready for action ...



Operations:

Double duty drivers

CAST drivers look to nation's best interests, in more ways than one ...



Working Smart: Accreditation credibility

The WIPP Radiochemistry team makes the grade ...



Safety & Security:

When zero says it all

WTS employees learn why zero is the best number ...



Our Team:

Team news

WIPP team news and information ...





DOE News Bodman sworn in as 11th Secretary of Energy

Dr. Samuel Bodman was sworn in as the 11th Secretary of the United States Department of Energy on February 1. Secretary Bodman was confirmed unanimously by the United States Senate on Monday, January 31, replacing Spencer Abraham who resigned on November 15, 2004.

Prior to being tapped by President Bush to lead the Energy Department, Bodman served as both Deputy Secretary of the Treasury (2003-present) and Deputy Secretary of Commerce (2001-2003).

Before joining the Bush Administration, Bodman was Chief Executive Officer of Boston-based Cabot Corporation and President and Chief Operating Officer of Fidelity Investments.

For six years prior to joining the private sector, Secretary Bodman served as an Associate Professor of Chemical Engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

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Corporate Board focuses on filling the pipeline to WIPP

illing the pipeline to WIPP with zero defects and a streamlined regulatory framework was the theme of the Corporate Board meeting held in Carlsbad on February 1-2. Over 100 DOE and contractor TRU waste managers came to Carlsbad for the National TRU Waste Summit and Corporate Board meeting.

Board representatives integrate DOE generator site and WIPP activities. The meetings provide a forum to discuss complex-wide issues, make recommendations to resolve issues, and develop priorities for limited resources.

The completion of cleanup at the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site (RFETS) looms large on the WIPP horizon due to RFETS' status as a major shipper to WIPP. Filling the void that will be created in the WIPP shipment rate once RFETS sends its last waste was a major topic of the Corporate Board.



WTS Assistant General Manager for Retrieval, Characterization and Transportation, Farok Sharif, discusses program issues with Bryan Roy, project manager at the Transuranic /LLW Processing Facility in Oak Ridge, TN.

During the meeting, generator site representatives were given opportunities to discuss technical issues and concerns unique to their TRU waste inventories, but were also tasked with developing goals and strategies to increase shipments and increase compliance with all necessary requirements. Difficult waste inventories was the topic of several breakout sessions as

representatives discussed ways to increase shipments from the



Lam Xuang, DOE-RF TRU Waste Program Manager

sites.

In support of the Batt Settlement Agreement with the state of Idaho, DOE looks to the Idaho National Laboratory (INL) to become the largest shipper to WIPP. The Batt Agreement calls for INL to ship 6,000 cubic meters of TRU waste to WIPP by December 2005.

At the end of the Summit and Board meeting, site representatives left with renewed commitments to increase shipments and decrease deviations from the requirements. In addition, a series of site calls was initiated to ensure that procedures are compliant and communication is increased.

The Corporate Board's effectiveness in filling the pipeline to WIPP, while meeting the needs of the generator sites, has been demonstrated at RFETS. Lam Xuang, TRU Waste Program manager for DOE-Rocky Flats notes, "Rocky Flats is accelerating cleanup and will complete its TRU waste shipments by April 2005, which is a year-and-a-half earlier than originally planned. This improvement could not have been accomplished without the extraordinary support from CBFO and the WIPP team. The TRU Waste Summit and the Corporate Board meetings have provided a forum for RFETS to raise our site-specific issues so that WIPP and the Board can recommend solutions for complex-wide benefits."

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Secretary Bodman holds a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from Cornell University and a doctorate in science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Secretary Bodman is married to M. Diane Bodman. He has three children, two stepchildren and eight grandchildren.

Bringing Panel 3 on line

anel 3 mining activities wrapped up last June, but finish work remained. Since then, the panel has been outfitted with electrical power, ventilation controls, pager phones, radiation and VOC monitoring systems, and evacuation alarms – a 16-month process from rough-cut to readiness. The Hazardous Waste Disposal Facility Permit requires that a New Mexico-registered Professional Engineer (PE) certify construction. As a final step, the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) must agree that Panel 3 construction meets permit requirements.

Stan Patchet, WTS Mine Engineering manager and a PE registered in New Mexico, says compliance to the permit begins from the first day of construction. "Work is periodically examined to ensure it meets requirements. It's an ongoing effort."



Mike Nunley, WTS Mine Operations, installs roof bolts in Panel 3.

he final walk-down includes tests of the evacuation alarms, as well as both monitoring systems. The continuous air monitors, for example, are checked to ensure that they properly perform an automatic shift to filtration. Patchet says the ventilation system was carefully checked. "We tested airflow in Panel 2 and 3 simultaneously to verify that placing Panel 3 in the waste disposal circuit doesn't adversely affect proper air flow to Panel 2."

In January, Patchet forwarded his PE certification letter along with Panel 3 construction drawings to WRES, who processed the document and forwarded it to CBFO. CBFO formally submitted the letter to NMED and EPA last week. NMED now has the option to inspect Panel 3 prior to approval or grant approval based on the information contained in the certification package.

Keeping in step with the waste disposal schedule, Panel 2 is expected to be filled by summer, followed by a smooth transition to waste emplacement in Panel 3. Mining crews began roughcuts in Panel 4 last month, thus a new certification cycle begins.



View of a Panel 3 drift.



The P2 Coordinator says save a tree



Did you know?

1 ton of uncoated virgin (non-recycled) printing and office paper uses 24 trees 1 ton of 100% virgin newsprint uses 12 trees 1 ton of high-end magazine paper - 15 trees 1 ton low-end magazine paper (catalogs) uses 7.6 trees

Save a tree

To determine the number of trees saved by using recycled paper, multiply the number of trees used to make a ton of paper (see categories above) by the percent of recycled content in your paper.

Example: 1 ton of office paper uses 24 trees X 30% recycled content = 7.2 trees saved.

To be a good consumer, always check paper products for recycled content.
Learn more at:

http://www.conservative.org/paper/papertypes/recymyths.shmtl

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WIPP drivers take part in Homeland Security program

ho knows more about the nation's highways than truck drivers? To tap the "road smarts" of hundreds of thousands of transportation workers, the American Trucking Association (ATA) established Highway Watch®. The program, administered under a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Transportation Security Administration, was created to protect the nation's transportation infrastructure.

Volunteer participants in Highway Watch® are trained by security and law enforcement personnel to spot and quickly report homeland security concerns, stranded vehicles, unsafe road conditions, accidents or impaired drivers. Each member is given a unique I.D. number and a hotline telephone number to the Highway Watch® call center, which is staffed 24-hours a day. The call center routes caller information to the appropriate state or regional emergency response agency.



CAST fleet: ready for action.

CAST Specialty Transportation drivers recently joined the ranks of Highway Watch®. "The training was very informative," said Gaylon Fuller, Cast Operations manager. "For example, we learned that there is a pattern to terrorist activity: they plan, they exercise the scenario and then attack. If you can break the pattern at any one point, the attack can be stopped. We were trained to be alert to these patterns."

uller explained that most commercial carriers have at least three means of communication, and WIPP trucks have four: CB, satellite phone, cell phone and TRANSCOM. "Our drivers also learned what to look for when witnessing a traffic accident or other safety-related situations and how to report them."

Any person or organization that works along our nation's roadways is eligible to participate in Highway Watch®, including school bus drivers, highway construction workers and hazardous material truck drivers. "We just wanted to do our part in keeping America safe," said Fuller.



CAST personnel are keeping the nation safe one shipment at a time.

Scenes from the WIPP site I



A truck prepares to receive a load of salt from the salt handling shaft.

WIPP's radiochemistry lab has the right stuff

ansour Akbarzadeh is feeling pretty good. The manager of the WIPP Radiochemistry Laboratory was celebrating his 8th anniversary of working at WIPP on the day we spoke, but that milestone couldn't eclipse the lab's recent reaccreditation by the DOE Laboratory Accreditation Program (DOELAP). Something that, according to the DOELAP organization, only 19 laboratories around the country have attained for either in vivo or in vitro bioassay or both.

"This was definitely a group effort," says Akbarzadeh who heads up the seven-member laboratory team. "Our group worked really hard for this, but we could not have done it without the support of WTS management and our DOE counterparts."

The three-phase process for recertification was as stringent as it was for the original certification. The first phase involved a detailed application through CBFO Safety Officer Richard Farrell that outlined the lab's internal program, quality assurance plan, procedures and physical location. Phase two required the lab to analyze samples and



Joe Ortiz performs radiochemistry analyses in the WIPP lab.

correctly identify their radiological contents. After successfully completing the first two phases, the third phase involved a three-day on-site visit by an assessment team. The lab is now certified through August 31, 2007.

The lab has also successfully participated in the National Institute of Standards and Technology's Radiochemistry Intercomparison Program (NRIP) for nearly 10 years and joined DOE's Mixed Analyte Performance Evaluation Program (MAPEP) last year. Not to mention last year's certification to perform emergency analysis of samples for government agencies, such as Homeland Security, in the event of a national emergency (See the July 22, 2004, issue of *TRU TeamWorks*).



Mansour Akbarzadeh leads the WIPP Radiochemistry team at CEMRC.

o is it a surprise that such a small team could achieve results like this? Not at all. The team analyzes all of WIPP's environmental samples (water, soil, sediment, filter, animals and vegetation) for the Annual Site Environmental Report, in addition to bioassay samples.

"We perform between 4,000 and 5,000 analyses a year, roughly 600 destructive analyses and the rest gross alpha/betas," says Akbarzadeh. "Our goal is to assure our counterparts, stakeholders and the public that not only are our analytical results accurate, but also through continuous team work we can obtain the results quickly, which could be critical for worker safety issues."

The lab's team is certainly accomplishing its goal and by the accolades the lab has been receiving, they are proving to employees and the public that they've got the right stuff.



Scenes from the WIPP site II



A view of the exhaust system at WIPP.

Zero injuries is the goal

cenario: Suppose I say I want to reduce my injury rate from last year's 2.0 to 1.0 this year, and I have 600 employees working for me. Here's what I'm saying: Twelve people got hurt last year, and that was too many. So, I'm setting a goal to allow six people to get hurt this year, but no more.

Washington Group International and quite a few other major corporations have decided that setting a goal to hurt even one person is just not right. Although keeping track of rates won't end, the company believes that the only truly moral goal is zero injuries. After all, who wants to volunteer to be the person who gets hurt?

Last fall, Washington Group invited WTS managers to participate in a presentation on Zero Injuries at the WIPP site given by Washington Group safety professionals Mike Nicholson and Ken Jenkins. The material was so profoundly encouraging that WTS management urged Washington Group to design a similar presentation for the entire WTS population. They accepted the challenge and returned to the site in December and January to offer the Zero Injuries concept to all WTS employees who work at the site.

This week, the four-hour presentation was also offered at the Skeen-Whitlock Building in Carlsbad for WTS employees who do not work at the site. "For the 'zero injury' concept to work we need a shift in our individual thought processes as they apply to safe behaviors," says Tom Fabian, WTS Human Resources / Technical Training. "It requires nothing less than an individual commitment to and accountability for safe behaviors all day, every day at work and off the job. It's not something you turn on and off when at work. Zero injury behavior is habitual."



Ken Jenkins of Washington Group shared a wealth of safety experience and knowledge with WIPP employees.

Washington Group believes that no employee should be injured while at work. Getting from 200 days without an injury to 201 days without an injury is just as easy, or as hard, as getting from 15 days to 16 days; we take every day one day at a time. If we make every day a safe day, we can and we will have zero injuries, one day at a time.

Guest writer: Curtis Wynne, WTS Safety & Health







Birthdays

Shane Thompson (WTS) - February 4
Monica Cox (CTAC) - February 10
Mak Walker (WTS) - February 11
Preston Harvey (WTS) - February 15
Jim Johns (WRES) - February 15
Mike Lipscomb (WTS) - February 17
Alisa West (WTS) - February 18
Joe Harvill (WTS) - February 19
Pat Charlet (L&M) - February 20
Dee Scott (CTAC) - February 23



WTS February Service Anniversaries

5 years Jimmy Stockton Danny Williams Larry Landrum

15 years Deanna Ybarra



Mileage per diem changes

The Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) has increased the standard mileage rate from 37.5 to 40.5 cents per mile for privately owned vehicles on official government travel, effective February 5.

WTS employees should use the new rate of 40.5 cents per mile when calculating personal vehicle mileage on expense reports.

Contact Deanne Rodriquez at 234-3177 for more information.

